



To: Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools
From: Robin Desmond, Chief Academic Officer *R. Desmond*
Re: Partnership Program with Project LEARN Youth Space
Date: March 20, 2022

Attached is a memorandum from LZ Nunn, Executive Director of Project LEARN, outlining a proposed partnership and costs associated with the proposed programming. Project LEARN is requesting Lowell Public Schools contribute \$50,000 towards the costs of providing this programming. Project LEARN will be contributing \$75,000 of grant funding towards the cost of the providing this programming.

The Project LEARN Youth Space will house innovative programs and services to inspire LPS students and equip them with the skills, knowledge and mindset needed for college, career and life. Project LEARN will collaborate with Lowell Public Schools on a variety of evidence-based programs that support college and career readiness and educational enrichment, as well as promote targeted district programming through effective communication and outreach.

Highlighted program areas include:

1) Early College Lowell

Early College Lowell is a dynamic educational opportunity open to all Lowell High School students regardless of what they plan to do after graduation. This program delivers enriching college-level courses to students while enrolled in high school, earn real college credit, and get an early start on their post-secondary education and career—at no cost to them or their families.

2) College and Career Explorations

Programs that help you identify student's skills and interests, explore jobs, and develop post-secondary plans.

3) STEAM Enrichment

STEAM focused after school programs to develop skills that serve students well into high school, college and ultimately into the workforce.

4) Student-Led Anti-Racism Initiative (Students Making Change)

A series of student-led antiracism training, dialogues, and learning opportunities. These series will engage students in training and dialogues about antiracism and antiracist action, develop

youth leadership and organizing skills within historically marginalized populations to shape a broader systems-wide dialogue about race, belonging, and inclusion; and promote conversation between students and staff to co-create a shared understanding of racial equity issues in Lowell's schools.



TO: Robin Desmond, Chief Academic Officer, Lowell Public Schools

FROM: LZ Nunn

DATE: February 1, 2022

RE: Report on Youth Innovation Space Programming - ESSER Request

Overview of the Youth Innovation Space

Need: Lowell Public Schools' recent Portrait of a Graduate process found that students, family, and community all prioritized *building practical and career skills as foundational for high school graduates*.

- **85%** of students surveyed want more even more opportunities beyond the school day to develop task-oriented and work-readiness skills, such as networking and communications skills, as well as time management and financial literacy skills.
- **90%** of local business owners identified the need for recent graduates to build technological, professional and business skills during their high school years.
- Parents from all communities expressed interest in students having access to additional technical/practical work skills and life skills (like financial management).

To support Lowell High's expanded efforts to provide hands-on career exploration and college readiness during the school day, Project LEARN's Youth Innovation Space (Y-Space) will strengthen existing Lowell High after-school programming and enrichment activities. The goal of the space is to support LHS students through college and career readiness programs, experiential learning, and career connections beyond the school day.

The Youth Innovation Space brings together four learning pillars for students to explore the careers of tomorrow and empower them for life after graduation:

- (1) **Hands-on career exploration**, including career internships, and apprenticeships. Project LEARN currently supports the Lowell High team to secure internship placements with local companies. In the Y-Space, we will also prepare students after school to be placed in summer internships through our Commencement 2 Careers internships, and arrange for students to be placed in job shadowing and career site visits.
- (2) **College and career planning**, such as workshops on financial aid, financial literacy, resume-building, interview skills, and public speaking. Building on our Early College Lowell partnership with educators from Lowell High and Middlesex Community College, we will expand offerings for students to earn college credit after school and during the summer/vacation weeks, while also building skills for job readiness.
- (3) **Skill-building in emerging industries**, like computer science, IT, and trade skills. Expanding our connections with Lowell High teachers around the SparkAlpha project and Engineering Club, we are planning a series of skills-based learning in computer



science, including piloting an after-school program where students earn college credit and gain a professionally-recognized credential.

(4) **Meaningful connections to professionals**, through mentoring, job shadowing, career pathways, college advising, networking, and other ways to build social capital. Our team will work closely and collaboratively with the Lowell High guidance and college and career staff to build complementary offerings that support after-school learning in LHS pathways, as well as career exploration, drop in mentoring with college students and regional professionals, networking events and more.

The Youth Innovation Space program model was developed in alignment with Lowell Public School's strategic plan (2020-2025) - *which focuses on enhancing equity, academic excellence, and student empowerment* - through extended learning opportunities and after-school workshops Project LEARN will deliver in coordination with LHS educators. Over 50 LHS teachers and school leaders and 100+ students shaped program design during focus groups.

Project LEARN's Y-Space Advisory Committee is comprised of LHS teachers, guidance counselors, and LPS administrators to ensure that the Y-Space's design and programming create an environment that best serves the needs of Lowell youth.

Outreach and Alignment to Existing Programs at Lowell High School

Outlined below are targeted ways in which the Y-Space will bolster existing LHS programming:

- **Create a space for mentoring programs** in partnership with UML and MCC college students, as well as local professionals.
- **Host guest speakers**, (for example, Massachusetts Society of CPAs, MCC and UML professors) to deepen students' classroom learning through career exploration.
- **Provide professional certificates/technical training**. Melanie Mai will assist with a Google Coursera pilot program in Data Analytics and IT Support (with the goal of serving 20 LHS students).
- **Host innovative after-school workshops and programs** for college & career readiness in collaboration with the LHS guidance department, MCC, and UML.
- **Host meetings/events for clubs and after-school activities**, for example [TRiO/GearUp, Upward Bound, COMPASS Program, Black Unity Club, Business Professionals of America, Environmental Club, STEM Club, Poetry Club, Center for Citizenship and Social Responsibility Club, etc.].
- **Serve as a collaborative after-school workspace** for students and teachers.

Programming Plan Through December 2023

Project LEARN's Youth Innovation Space will promote greater student engagement in existing college and work-readiness programs while also creating new STEAM-focused learning and skill-building opportunities. This space will allow us to provide flexible after-school workshops



and opportunities to accommodate different student needs for both college and career. Specifically, programming will include:

5-Month Spring 2022 Programming Plan (Feb- June 2022) <i>Est. 120+ students served monthly Est. 1,400+ students served annually</i>	
February 2022 Y-Space opens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Y-Space opens end of February (renovations completed Feb. 24th) - Google Coursera Certificate Program begins (<i>Program Management/Data Analytics/IT Support</i>)
March 2022 50-60+ students served monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Y-Space Open House Event for LHS students, families, teachers - Flexible meeting space for Lowell High clubs (Lowell Student Advisory Council, Diverse Teacher Leaders, etc.) and extracurriculars - ONGOING - Google Coursera Certificate Program continues - After-school drop-in hours with LHS guidance counselors - After-school drop-in hours for mentoring, resume-building, internships - After-school, biweekly coffee talks with industry leaders
April 2022 60-100+ students served monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drop-in hours for guidance, mentoring, industry coffee talks continue - Google Coursera Certificate Program continues - Public Speaking Workshops: pitch events/small groups - College Application Workshops for juniors
May 2022 80-120+ students served monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drop-in hours for guidance, mentoring, industry coffee talks continue - Google Coursera Certificate Program continues - Live Podcast Studio (collaboration w/ LTC), biweekly workshops - Public Speaking Workshops: pitch events/small groups
June 2022 120-200+ students served monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commencement 2 Careers internships start, serving 120+ students - Drop-in hours for guidance, mentoring, industry coffee talks continue - Live Podcast Studio (collaboration w/ LTC), biweekly workshops

Budget Request Details

Project LEARN requests your partnership and investment of \$50,000 in launching a Youth Innovation Space (located in downtown Lowell) with the long-term goal of improving access and economic mobility outcomes for students. Y-Space will serve as a positive extension of the school-day, an experiential learning space that prioritizes cross-collaboration and inspires students' career interests, hopes, and ambitions.

Through Project LEARN, ESSER funds will be used for a variety of after-school college and career readiness programs to support student learning outcomes and combat the impact of COVID-19 on students' academic and social emotional learning needs:



Y-Space Programming Staff — \$15,500

- Funds Project LEARN staff (Program Director, Program Assistant) and educational consultants for the coordination and planning of Y-Space after-school programming

Student Experiential Learning & After-School/Extended Day Learning — \$3,000

- Program support staff at Y-Space
 - Funds **6 part-time support staff** for after-school programming @ \$500/each

After-School Programs/Workshop Supplies — \$24,700

- After-School Mentoring Program - \$8,000
 - Serves up to **80 students each semester** @ \$100/student; covers expenses related to mentor matching events/surveys, program supplies, and student professional development training
 - Funds planning and implementation of pilot after-school mentoring program with mentor matching events and in-person mentoring session hosted at Y-Space
 - Focuses on effective mentor matching to align with students' interests/career goals; mentors will provide weekly college/career guidance and SEL support
- College & Career Prep Series - \$2,200
 - Funds 4-Day Mock Interview Week @ \$700, April 2022; mock interviews held at Y-Space in collaboration with LHS guidance department; **80 students served**
 - Funds 3 resume-building workshops @ \$500 per workshop; covers student materials and workshop leaders fees; **60 students served**
- Google Coursera Certificate Program fees - \$5,000
 - **Funds 24 students** to participate receive a Google Certificate upon completion
 - Students receive weekly check-in support and access to online Google Coursera Certificate Program (IT support, Data Analytics)
 - Covers \$39/monthly subscription fee x 3 months access to Google Coursera
 - Supports current LHS STEM/Computer Science learning while also providing students with a tangible skill-set and Google Certificate for resumes/Naviance
- Entrepreneurship Workshops - \$3,000
 - **Funds 20 students** for 1-week SparkAlpha STEM entrepreneurship program
 - Covers program fees, workshop supplies, professional mentoring, hands-on design/prototype materials, and campus tours of MCC and UML
- IDEA Camp Summer Workshops - \$5,000
 - **Funds 24 students** to participate in a Harvard MedScience in-person one-week program to learn about medical careers, and processes in medical careers.



- **Funds 15 students** to participate in a Umass Lowell Difference Maker Entrepreneurship Workshop in-person one-week program to learn business and entrepreneurship skills, design thinking and connect with regional entrepreneurs.
- **Funds 15 students** to participate in a drone-building workshop held in April
- After-School Study Space - \$1,500
 - Funds 2 workshop tables @ \$500 & 5 lab/design kits @ \$100 for IDEA Camp students

COVID-19 Sanitation/Safety Supplies — \$2,800

- HEPA Air Purification Filters - \$2,400 (Funds 3 HEPA air purification filters @ \$800)
- UV Disinfection Light - \$400

Technology — \$1,500

- Touchscreen Panel - \$1,500
Funds 1 Touchscreen panel for use by student speakers, guest speakers, and staff to support student understanding during workshops, group presentation, public speaking/communication skills & community learning events

Marketing/PR/Website/Flyer — \$2,500

- Funds student recruitment materials: flyers, posters, postcards, brochures, web & social

2022 TOTAL ESSER Funding Request: \$50,000

Memorandum of Agreement
Between Project LEARN and Lowell Public Schools

I. Introduction

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), dated May 5th, 2022, is by and between Project LEARN, a non-profit organization that works to support Lowell Public Schools, “LPS” and fund innovative programs and services to inspire students and equip them with the skills, knowledge and mindset they need for college, career and life; and Lowell Public Schools, a public school district located in Lowell, Massachusetts.

Project LEARN, hereinafter referred to as “PROJECT PARTNER”, and Lowell School District, hereinafter referred to as “SCHOOL DISTRICT”; collectively referred to as “PARTNERS”.

The Partners wish to work together in compliance with the following clauses:

II. Purpose of the Understanding

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) sets out the terms by which the Project Partner and School District will *collaborate to identify, distribute, and coordinate resources that will be used to close the opportunity gap for LPS students* in compliance with Project Partner policies, Massachusetts educational code, and administrative policies within the Lowell Public Schools District.

III. Principal Contacts

The Principal Contact for the Project Partner will be LZ Nunn and Jill Rothschild will be the Principal Contact for the School District. Such Principal Contacts may be changed in writing from time to time by their respective Partners.

Project LEARN:

LZ Nunn
Executive Director
8 Kirk St., Lowell, MA 01852
1-(978)-726-5329

Lowell Public Schools:

Jill Rothschild
Assistant Head of Schools
50 Father Morissette Boulevard, Lowell, MA 01852
1-(978)-937-8900

The Principal Contacts are responsible for ensuring the conduct of activities listed below.

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IV. Project Partner Roles and Responsibilities

Project LEARN agrees to:

- 1) Host college and career readiness events, workshops, and programs during after school hours for Lowell High and LPS students at the new Youth Innovation Space (Y-SPACE), located at 58 Prescott St., Lowell, MA 01852.
- 2) Provide programming space for after school enrichment activities for Lowell High and LPS students at the Y-Space.
- 3) Connect Lowell High and LPS students with college and career readiness opportunities, including guest speakers, mentors, and internship placements.
- 4) Increase visibility of existing LPS after school programs/extracurriculars and provide programmatic support to enhance LPS after school enrichment.
- 5) Collaborate with community partners to provide Lowell High and LPS students with summer college and career enrichment opportunities, such as internship placements and immersive learning experiences (IDEA Camp).
- 6) Provide programmatic and management support for various LPS initiatives, including Early College Lowell, and the Student-Led Anti Racism Initiative (Students Making Change).
- 7) Support teacher recruitment and retention efforts enacted by the LPS Human Resources Department by researching best practices and communication strategies to advance LPS's goals on teacher hiring.
- 8) Provide targeted marketing support to advance LPS teacher recruitment efforts through communications and visibility campaigns.
- 9) Serve as the primary point of contact for grant funder(s) such as the Parker Foundation and coordinate follow-up on grant reports, budgets, and project plans.
- 10) Promote positive public relations and communications between LPS and community partners, and strategically enhance visibility of LPS's strong academic and after school program outcomes.

V. School District Roles and Responsibilities

Lowell Public Schools agrees to:

- 1) Provide timely information and support for grant proposal documents and budgets.
- 2) Designate a principal contact to be co-responsible (along with Project LEARN's principal contact) for grant reporting, program delivery, timelines, and budgets.
- 3) Assist in the distribution feedback surveys, support data collection, and provide access to student and teacher data related to agreed upon performance goals/program outcomes.
- 4) Provide flexible coordination time to fulfill responsibilities to the Project Partner.
- 5) Provide timely guidance and direction for accessing school resources, which are necessary to program delivery and student outcomes.
- 6) Ensure active participation from school staff to achieve agreed upon performance goals.

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Between Project LEARN and Lowell Public Schools

- 7) Endorse active school staff participation in Project Partner-sponsored events, workshops, and programs.
- 8) Support Lowell High and LPS student recruitment efforts through marketing and social media promotion of Project Partner-sponsored events, workshops, and programs.
- 9) Designate staff/teacher support in advisory roles to support Project Partner in the alignment of college and career readiness programming to LPS performance goals.
- 10) Provide event coordination, administrative, and logistical support for Project Partner-sponsored events, workshops, and programs.

VI. Program and Projects

Project LEARN will collaborate with Lowell Public Schools on a variety of evidence-based programs that support college and career readiness and educational enrichment, as well as promote targeted District programming through effective communication and outreach.

Highlighted program areas include:

1) Early College Lowell

Early College Lowell is a dynamic educational opportunity open to all Lowell High School students regardless of what they plan to do after graduation. This program delivers enriching college-level courses to students while enrolled in high school, earn real college credit, and get an early start on their post-secondary education and career—at no cost to them or their families.

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Each partner agrees to provide support for this collaboration to ensure effective program delivery that enhances student achievement and outcomes.

Project Partner Agrees to:

- Designate a point person on staff to integrate school and community resources
- Identify, coordinate, and monitor existing school and community resources
- Facilitate communication and interaction between service providers and LPS point(s) of contact
- Link service providers to school, students, and families and manage the delivery of these services
- Follow-up on student performance and progress and provide feedback to the school and partners
- Monitor and document the effectiveness of service provider activities on total school performance
- Provide access to national best practices, training, and technical assistance
- Ensure activities align with goals of school(s) and the LPS Strategic Plan

School District Agrees to:

- Designate a school-based administrator to be the key point of contact
- Opportunities for Lead Partner staff to meet regularly with faculty and staff
- Appropriate student referral information
- Provide data related to agreed performance goals
- Endorsement of school staff participation in Lead Partner-sponsored events
- Lead Partner involvement in relevant school teams and in development of School Improvement Plan
- Feedback to Lead Partner regarding quality of Lead Partner and other partner services
- Flexibility of Coordinator's time to fulfill responsibilities to Lead Partner
- Direction for accessing resources in the school
- Active participation by school staff in Coordinating Council

IX. Duration of the Understanding

This MOA shall take effect upon signing by both Partners and shall remain in effect for a period from May 5, 2022 to June 30, 2023. The provisions of this MOA may only be amended or updated at any time through mutual written agreement by both Partners.

The MOA may be renewed at the end of this period by mutual written agreement by both Partners.

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Between Project LEARN and Lowell Public Schools

Any Partner can terminate this MOA and any other related agreement, workplan, and budget at any time and for any reason by giving 30 days prior written notice to the other Partner. Provided, however, that in the event any Partner fails to perform any of its obligations under this MOA, the other Partner shall have the right to terminate this MOA or any related agreement immediately upon written notice.

X. Signatures of Parties

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) embodies the entirety and complete understanding and agreement between the Partners, and no amendment will be effective unless signed by both Partners. If the terms of this MOA are acceptable and in agreement, please sign and date this letter.

FOR PROJECT LEARN

(Project Partner Signature)

(Date)

FOR LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(School District Signature)

(Date)